

**Community Preservation Act Committee (CPAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, December 19, 2013**

The meeting was called to order at 7:14 pm by Mary Streeter, Vice Chair, in the Community Room at the Police Department

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Marilyn Blaustein, Paris Boice, Ellen Kosmer, Jim Oldham, Mary Streeter

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Sandy Anderson, Jim Brissette, Peter Jessop, Chair

**STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:**

Sonia Aldrich, Comptroller, and CPAC Staff Liaison; David Ziomek, Assistant Town Manager and Conservation and Planning Director

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Maurianne Adams- Amherst Community Land Trust  
TracyLee Boutilier

**AGENDA:**

- David Ziomek update on ongoing projects
- Paris Boice and Jim Oldham update on multiple year funding plan
- Review revised draft letter to send to organizations reminding them to give CPAC an update
- Review financial status and available CPA budget for FY2015
- Review proposals submitted for funding
- Set agenda for next meeting
- Approve any minutes
- Topics the Chair did not reasonably anticipate 48 hours before the meeting
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**DISCUSSION:**

- David Ziomek update on ongoing projects
  - Presenting to give the committee an update on project statuses.
  - See detailed Spreadsheet of CPA Balances as of November 14, 2013.
  - Broken down into the four CPA categories; Affordable Housing, Open Space, Recreation and Historic Preservation.
  - Highlighted projects that will be completed and those that will have funds that will come back to the committee.
  - Noted that the first column listed as Original Appropriation FY14 is not the actual original appropriation, but only the remaining funds from FY2014. Committee members asked for the actual original appropriation to be shown in future spreadsheets.
  - David Ziomek answered specific questions about the Rolling Green Study

- and the Renters Emergency Fund
  - David Ziomek answered specific questions about the \$25,000 for North Amherst Community Farm and about the delay in drafting the conservation restriction for this property. Uncertain if this project will happen.
  - David Ziomek suggested we look into going into executive session to discuss real estate acquisitions, conservation restrictions and other topics that may not be ready to share with the public.
  - Historic Preservation projects account for the majority of ongoing projects and David Ziomek highlighted a few projects and answered questions about specific projects.
  - David Ziomek estimates that \$70,362.67 will be returned from Historic Preservation projects. Sonia will cross-reference and give the committee an update on the actual dollar amount that will be returned.
  - Mary Streeter asked David Ziomek to go over some of the process that recipients go through to access funds. She also highlighted the need to have a transparent process and to have “boilerplate” conservation and historical preservation restrictions available to the public. David Ziomek explained that the restrictions are really project specific.
- Paris Boice and Jim Oldham update on multiple year funding plan
  - Paris Boice shared some of the correspondence from Stuart Saginor in response to an inquiry about CPAC public hearings and developing a plan for recommending projects based on the community’s needs. From Stuart Saginor, "One thing to note is that the hearing is designed mostly to get input from the public on the needs and priorities of the town regarding the four CPA categories, not as a review session for specific projects."
  - Points from the presentation:
    - Our CPAC should create a plan of our community's needs using input from the committee and the town entities that are represented on the committee. We should also include a financial plan.
    - We should hold a public hearing to guide and inform our decisions in regards to said plan, and update the plan annually. This should be separate from any public comment we hear in regards to proposals.
    - The plan should guide our decision making throughout the proposal review sessions and in making recommendations to Town Meeting.
    - It is probably too late to change our process for this round, but we should focus on it later this spring/summer before the next round of proposals. Jim Oldham suggested that we think about how we can do this in a limited way this year.
    - Mary Streeter suggested that we make sure the feeder committees, Conservation Commission, Historical Commission, etc. know that we are working on a broader CPAC plan.
    - Jim Oldham explained that it would be helpful to study other

communities' plans (ones we've obtained and others) in greater

detail to identify what we consider best practices for defining priorities and needs. Most plans are on the Coalition's website. And the plans range greatly in size, detail and quality. Our plan will most likely change over the years depending on what the community's needs are.

- David Ziomek highlighted that we already have many plans from other Town committees that would help inform our decisions, and urged us to really check out other communities' plans.
- Ellen Kosmer pointed out that the funds tend to equalize over the four areas over time.
- Jim Oldham said, one of the big questions is; if we want to have the funds spread out equally or do we want to focus more on one area? And typically when you look over a longer period of time, we tend to have the funds spread out, and does this happen based on the community's needs, based on the CPAC decision to spread out funds, or because certain commissions and committees are more active some years than others?
- Mary Streeter pointed out that the three At-Large members of the CPAC do represent and voice public input, and that it seems like this year, housing is the priority.
- David Ziomek highlighted that the community has made the choice to allocate the funds equally over the areas and to allocate all of the funds available just through the proposal process.
- Ellen Kosmer suggested that we let the public know at our next public hearing that we plan to hold a future public hearing and create a CPA plan for Amherst.
- Review revised draft letter to send to organizations reminding them to give CPAC an update
  - Mary Streeter shared a Draft of the letter to sent to organizations
  - Marilyn Blaustein asked how this draft letter related to the update and spreadsheet that we received from David Ziomek earlier.
  - It might be redundant to ask for an update when we already have most of the information.
  - David Ziomek said that Town Staff has been in touch with each of the representatives of past projects and would be happy to take a bit of time at several future meetings to go over the projects in detail.
  - Mary Streeter and other committee members think having a narrative is helpful and think that we should do both (Spreadsheet and Letter).
  - David Ziomek thinks that the estimate on the spreadsheet of \$70,000-\$80,000 coming back to the committee is probably accurate and that sending out a letter to get an update with the hopes of getting funds back for this round is unlikely.
  - Marilyn Blaustein pointed out that on the spreadsheet it is obvious which

projects have been stagnant over the past year and suggested maybe just hearing from those projects and not from every single project.

- Ellen Kosmer thinks it is an important tool for all projects to think about how they are spending their funds and to make sure they are acting on the funds.
- Mary Streeter commented that we should publicize more where the CPA dollars are at work. She doesn't think it is too burdensome to ask a proposer to fill out a one page document to give the committee an update.
- Put this on the agenda for next time and think about who should receive this document and how much time they should have to complete it.
- Review financial status and available CPA budget for FY2015
  - Returned appropriations were added in.
  - Once all appropriations from Spreadsheet of CPA Balances are returned there should be \$586,653 available for proposals this round.
- Review Proposals submitted for funding
  - Normally we tend to brainstorm questions about proposals ahead of time.
  - We also need to set presentation dates. There has been a request for Housing Proposals to be on February 6th.
  - Next meeting is generally when we come up with the list of questions.
  - February 6th does not work for all housing projects, Echo Village/Rolling Green
  - January 9th-Brainstorming questions
  - January 23rd- Presentations (Echo Village/Rolling Green)
  - February 6th- Presentations (Amherst Community Land Trust)
  - February 20th- Public Hearing
  - Sonia Aldrich has agreed to contact people and set up presentations for one of those two evenings by the next meeting. Mary Streeter will update the website with the presentation schedule.
  - Peter Jessop, via email, asked the committee to discuss if we might need legal counsel on any of the proposals. Ellen Kosmer thinks we might have a better idea if we need legal opinions when we go through the proposals and generate questions.
  - Mary Streeter thought we might need legal counsel on the Amherst Community Land Trust and Echo Village/Rolling Green. David Ziomek asked Mary Streeter if there was something in particular about the Echo Village/Rolling Green project that she thought might need legal counsel. She could not think of anything in particular. David pointed out that bonding over 20 years has been determined by Town Counsel to be an appropriate way to bond a project.
  - Jim Oldham wanted clarity on the Amherst Community Land Trust and Echo Village/Rolling Green proposals, noting that a lot more information is needed before going forward with funding these proposals.
  - Amherst Community Land Trust- Cannot use CPA funds for start up funds.

- Maurianne Adams- spoke about correspondence with CPA and legal counsel
  - Need more clarity about project and they would talk within their group and get a revised and clarified proposal to Sonia Aldrich by January 6<sup>th</sup>, several days before the CPAC's next meeting.
- More information and clarification from proposers can be ongoing during presentations and perhaps even after, up until the voting that will occur after the public hearing on February 20<sup>th</sup>.
- TracyLee Boutilier spoke about the Amherst Housing and Sheltering Committee- HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program proposal and responded to questions from the committee about whether or not the proposal would still be viable. She thinks that it is still viable, but may not be for the full amount asked for in the proposal. This is considered support for housing. The Housing and Sheltering Committee brought this complex project forth.
- Mary Streeter asked for more information on the Groff Park Chlorinator. David Ziomek said that DPW will come to speak to this and it is not different from the request for improvements to the Mill River Pool.
- Set agenda for next meeting
  - Type out and give questions about proposals to Marilyn ahead of time, if possible.
  - Plan a March meeting to discuss report to Town Meeting and possibly finish voting on projects.
  - Tentatively scheduled for Thursday March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014
  - David Ziomek thinks all factors may not be known for all projects, so we may need to write articles for the warrant with contingencies.
  - May also need to schedule an executive session to discuss real estate acquisitions.
  - Mary Streeter asked for a ballpark figure of what might be expected to pay for bonding the Echo Village/Rolling Green over 20 years.
  - Debts and set asides count towards the 10% required for the three categories.

#### MOTION:

A motion was made by Paris, Seconded by Marilyn Blaustein to adjourn at 8:53 pm.

#### VOTED:

Unanimously

#### NEXT MEETINGS:

Future meetings: All future meetings will be held in the Community Room at the Police Department at 7pm.

January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014

January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014  
February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014

#### DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED

- Spreadsheet of CPA Balances as of November 14, 2013
- Draft letter to send to organizations reminding them to give CPAC an update
- Financial Status for CPA Funds
- Letter from Nathaniel Malloy about NACF release of funds
- CPC; Is our project allowable?
- CPAC Proposal Request Form for FY2015: Coalition of Amherst Neighborhoods/Amherst Community Land Trust
- CPAC Proposal Request Form for FY2015: Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity
- CPAC Proposal Request Form for FY2015: Amherst Conservation Commission-Saul Property
- CPAC Proposal Request Form for FY2015: Amherst Conservation Commission-Appraisals and Surveys
- CPAC Proposal Request Form for FY2015: Town of Amherst- Echo Village and/or Rolling Green
- CPAC Proposal Request Form for FY2015: Amherst Historical Commission- 332 West St.
- CPAC Proposal Request Form for FY2015: Amherst Housing and Sheltering Committee- HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program
- CPAC Proposal Request Form for FY2015: Amherst DPW- Groff Park Wading Pool
- CPAC Proposal Request Form for FY2015: Amherst DPW-Sweetser Park Fountain
- Correspondence from Stuart Saginor- Amherst Community Land Trust Proposal
- Correspondence from Shirin Everett, Town Counsel- Amherst Community Land Trust Proposal
- Correspondence between Sonia Aldrich and Maurianne Adams- Amherst Community Land Trust Proposal

Submitted by Paris Boice  
Approved on May 8, 2014